

C052-ST Cantal mounts



Twenty million years ago, the Cantal Mountains were nothing more than a 3000 meter-high volcano of a 20-kilometer diameter. Liquid and viscous lavas spouted out from several vents. The glaciers of the Quaternary period and the numerous streams levelled off the mountain, shaped its sides, cleared out the sides of the old vents (such as the Puy Riou) and carved out creeks and valleys to give us the marvellous scenery of this hike.

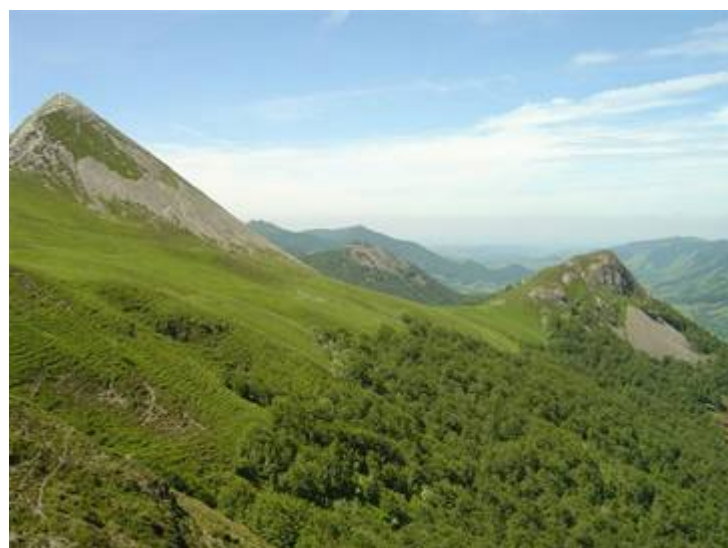


Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrival at MURAT. This small city takes up a remarkable spot of beauty, with its volcanic peaks which dominates the city and on which are perched grey houses covered with *Lauze* (flat stone specific to this region). Visit the city of Murat, its church, Notre-Dame-de-Ohoux, its covered market (metallic, 19th century construction), and its fountains and elegant houses.
Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in the center of the city.

Day 2 - MURAT - LE LIORAN (7 and a half hour walk –alt. gain: 850 meters). You will begin the walk by passing through Murat and climbing the Rocher de Bonnevie (Bonnevie Rock), which overlooks the city. Next, walking along the heights and passing through the picturesque hamlet of Cheyrouze, you will climb up out of the Alagnon Valley. You will make your way through the meadows and forests to reach the Roches de Vassivières (Vassivières Rocks) and the Rocher du Bec de l’Aigle (the Bec de l’Aigle Rock). You will now find yourself in a mountainous landscape of nothing by rocks. You will pass around the Teton de Venus and Le Puy Bataillouse before descending towards Super-Lioran by the Meije Costes Buron and the Lioran Forest.
Transfer by taxi to St Jacques des Blats - Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in St Jean des Blats

Day 3 - LE LIORAN - THIEZAC (8 hour walk –alt. gain: 750 meters). *Return by taxi to Le Lioran* -The day will begin brutally with the climbing of the Plomb du Cantal (1855 meters), from where you will look out over the whole region. The gorgeous panorama is worth the effort! You will descend slowly then, to Thiezac. After the Col de la Chèvre (the Goat Pass), you will leave the crests for the Puy Gros and Chaos de Casteltinet, and then enter into Thiezac, a pleasant summer resort. We recommend a visit of the Gothic church and the Notre-Dame-de Consolation Chapel that overlooks the village - *Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in the village.*



Day 4 - THIEZAC - MANDAILLES (6 and a half hour walk – alt. gain : 800 meters). After leaving Thiezac and climbing on the first heights around the village, you will walk down into the admired valley of the Faillitoux Waterfall. Then, you will begin to slowly climb towards the Elanceze Summit, passing through forests and pastures, and seeing on your way the cowsheds of Braqueville and Borie Haute. You will arrive at the Col de Pertus (Pertus Pass) and begin your descent to Mandailles, by way of the Luc Waterfall and the hamlet of Liadouze - *Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a charming one-star hotel or guesthouse (room with private facilities) in the village.*

Day 5 - MANDAILLES - LE CLAUX (6 and a half hour walk – alt. gain : 900 meters). You will leave Mandailles by the hamlets of Bardugué and Lasteyrie before climbing towards the Puy Chavaroché (1 739 m) and arriving at the Col de Redondet (Redondet Pass). You will then walk down to the Pas de Peyrol (Peyrol Pass). You will pass around the Puy de la Tourte, climb to the Suc de la Blatte, and pass through the Chaumillous ski resort to descend to Le Claux –
Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in the village.

Day 6 - LE CLAUX - ST JACQUES DES BLATS (8 hour walk - alt. gain : 950 meters). Escort by taxi to the Serre Pass. From this pass, you will climb up to the Peyrol Pass (Pas de Peyrol) and the Puy Mary (1783 meters). You will walk along the crest line, pass around the Puy de Peyre Arse, and walk down to the Passes of Cabre and Rombière towards the Puy Griou. You will skirt around the Puy Griou Pass and descend to Saint Jacques des Blats to end this stage.
Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel in the village.



Day 7 - ST JACQUES DES BLATS - MURAT (8 hour walk – alt. gain : 950 meters). You will once again climb to the Plomb du Cantal. From Saint Jacques, you will pass through the hamlet of Les Gardes, the Framadog “buron”, and under the rocky ridge of the Arpon du Diable. From Puy Burnet (1806 meters), you will arrive at the Plomb du Cantal before walking down to the Prat de Bouc Pass. Through the forest, and passing next to Les Vergnes Waterfall, you will arrive in the village of Albepierre-Bredons and the hamlet of Bredons, home to a small, fortified church that dates to the 11th century, the one and only remain of a Benedictine priory, built on a volcanic hill that dominates Murat and the Alagnon valley.
Dinner, lodging and breakfast in a two-star hotel.

Day 8 - MURAT. Tour ends after breakfast

Season

From end of May to middle of October but be careful this area is very crowded in summer time and we recommend you (if you can) to come outside this period. Nevertheless this area attracts a lot of tourists and you have to reserve earlier to get the best rooms.

What's included?

- 7 nights' accommodation in 1 & 2-star hotels
- 7 breakfasts – 7 dinners
- Hotel to hotel luggage transfer along the trail.
- Taxi transfer : St Jacques des Blats-the Serre pass,
- Le Lioran – St Jacques des Blats (x2)
- A set of maps (1/25 000 scale) with the route marked on and detailed route notes describing the trail.
- A daily itinerary together with information about facilities and places of interest along the trail.
- Emergency assistance.

Visa fees - transportation fees to and from the walk area - Insurance (strongly recommended on all trips) - Transfers except those mentioned above –Entrance fees - Drinks - Additional meals - Spending of personal nature e.g. laundry, souvenirs, phone calls,... are not included

Getting there and away

By train: The Murat train station is located on the Paris-Clermont-Aurillac line. There are a few trains daily from Paris to Murat, otherwise a connection can be made in Neussargues.

By car: Murat is accessible by A75 (Clermont Ferrand-Montpellier motorway), then by route N121 from Massiac, or by route D926 from Saint Flour.

Where to park : Public unguarded parking available in Murat

Walk difficulty

Grade 4 - 6 to 9 hours walking a day with long ascents and descents more than 1000 m. You walk high mountains as the Alps or Massif Central, on rough and stony paths. On occasion route-finding may be tricky and request some walking experience. A reasonably high standard of fitness and stamina are essential for enjoyment of this hike

